

# NODPA NEWS

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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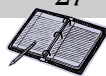
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## Organic Industry News

### Proposed Pasture Rule Expected in August

by Kathie Arnold

The National Organic Program (NOP) is currently writing a Proposed Rule for changes in the regulation on Access to Pasture. The NOP received over 64,000 comments plus nearly 18,000 signatures on petitions during the 60-day public comment period on the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on pasture that ended on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Over 99% of the comments received were positive towards rule revision, asking that enforceable pasture standards for organic livestock be put in place.

During the comment period, there was an extensive level of communication and cooperation between organizations within the organic community--collaborating on coming to a shared position. NODPA submitted extensive comment to the NOP in conjunction with MODPA and WODPA, NODPA's counterparts in the Midwest and West. The document, which answered all 35 questions posed by the NOP and included an extensive bibliography of supporting studies, was developed with input from numerous people and organizations. It was co-signed by 63 supporting organizations, including natural foods cooperatives from across the country, businesses, farmer cooperatives, and a myriad other national and regional organizations. 31 individuals signed on in support as well, from university professor emeriti to organic dairy producers, and

(Continued on page 3)

### NODPA 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Days Event August 18 & 19, 2006 Organic Dairy Research Farm, Durham, UNH

by Ed Maltby

This years Field Days event sponsored by **Horizon Organic, Organic Valley Family of Farms, Stonyfield Farm Inc, OCPP/Pro-Cert Canada Inc and Lakeview Organic Grain** will be held at Huddleston Hall, University of New Hampshire, 73 Main St, Durham, NH. At this critical time for the organic dairy industry, the two day event promises to be a lively couple of days filled with information, discussion, education and networking.

The event kicks off on Friday afternoon with a tour of the new UNH Organic Dairy Research Farm with Chuck Schwab and Kevin Brussell: Chuck Schwab, Professor, Dairy Nutrition, UNH, and Kevin Brussell, Farm Manager, who previously lived and worked on his family's fifth-generation, 500-acre Illinois farm, which produces a wide diversity of crops and forages, including certified organic grains and beans. They will share their vision for this exciting project as they guide the tour around the two adjoining UNH-owned farms, the Burley-Demeritt Farm and the Bartlett-Dudley Farm. Together, the two farms provide over 130 acres of cropland and over 170 acres of woods, trails and permanent

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*(Continued from Pasture Rule, page 1)*

that was without any formal effort to solicit individual signatures.

The NOP plans to issue a Proposed Rule on pasture access by the end of August, which will be followed by another public comment period. After that, a Final Rule will be issued as the final step in the process, and the regulation will likely become effective with a designated phase-in period. ♦

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*(Continued from Field Days, page 1)*

pasture, of which 215 acres are certified organic. The buildings will be located at the Burley-Demeritt Farm, the former home of the UNH Livestock program. New facilities will include a milking center with parlor and holding area, a pack barn for 80 cows, a small feed mill attached to a 3-sided shed for equipment, feed and bedding storage, and a small loafing shed for winter housing of heifers (see article in this issue for more detailed information).

On Friday evening, after socializing and some great food, NODPA President, Steve Morrison will introduce Ned Porter, Maine Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, who will speak on the great work that organic dairies have been doing in Maine. The keynote speaker for the evening will be Mark Bradley who is the Associate Deputy Administrator for the National Organic Program (NOP) and is responsible for the development and maintenance of the U.S. National Organic Standards and the accreditation of private and government organizations that certify organic producers and handlers on behalf of the USDA. Mark previously worked as NOP Accreditation Manager, where he supervised the review and approval of approximately 100 NOP-accredited organic certification bodies worldwide. Mark Bradley will speak about the work he does and how he sees the future for the program; the need for clarity in rule making and the need to work together to enforce high standards. He is even brave enough to take questions!

NODPA's annual meeting will follow the keynote speech and will be restricted to organically certified and transitional dairy farmers. This is one time of the year that NODPA members can talk freely with each other in person, share experiences, and give direction to the NODPA Board. During the annual meeting, NODPA members will be informed of the past years activities and encouraged to give feedback on ways in which the organization can better represent their interests. Ed Maltby will then moderate a discussion that will set the priorities for the coming year.

Saturday will start early with breakfast from 8:00

am. The proceedings start at 9:00 with a welcome by New Hampshire Commissioner of Agriculture, Markets and Food, Steve Taylor, and USDA Associate Deputy Administrator Mark Bradley. Following the welcome, nationally recognized Lancaster County PA dairy practitioner, **Dr Hubert Karreman, VMD** will talk about treating cows naturally and will take questions at the end of his presentation. Hue, and his wife Becky, run Penn Dutch Cow Care, a practice dedicated to working with dairy farmers who are ecologically motivated and who prefer natural treatments for their cows. Karreman's experience in agriculture currently spans 20 years and encompasses soil science, soil conservation, cropping, and management intensive grazing. His interest in complementary and alternative treatments stems from his tenure as herdsman on Seven Stars Farm, a Biodynamic farm in Kimberlton, PA. During a six-month stretch of using only natural treatments on the milking herd, he realized that going to school to learn conventional veterinary medicine would better prepare him to work with all kinds of therapies in dairy cows.

**Gary Zimmer, president, Midwestern Bio-Ag**, Spring Green, Wis., will follow Hue and will talk about how healthy soils produce healthy feed for healthy livestock, and practical ideas on what works well in New England. Gary is a farmer, author, agribusinessman and educator dedicated to biological agriculture. Raised on a Wisconsin dairy farm, he studied dairy nutrition, earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and a master's degree from the University of Hawaii, combined with years of hands-on farming experience. Teaching agriculture in southern Minnesota, he continued learning, studying, reading, asking questions and looking at ways of farming with an open mind. For the past 25 years, Gary has been evaluating farming practices as a consultant, on his family's farm, and as president of Midwestern Bio-Ag, a biological farming consulting company located in Blue Mounds, Wis. He operates the Bio-Ag Learning Center, where biological farming practices and agricultural products are field tested. The Zimmer family owns and operates Otter Creek Organic Farm, which includes a 150-cow organic dairy herd and utilizes the ideas Gary has gleaned over a lifetime spent studying agriculture.

At around 12:30, a deli-style lunch buffet will be available, with the raffle for door prizes being held during lunch. Door prizes will include some books from Acres USA; 80lb bag of calf feed from Lakeview Organic Grain; Masto Cream and an Urgent

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Continued from Field Days, page 3)*

Care Kit from Washington Homeopathic Products; live-stock supplements from Celletech Ltd plus hats, bumper stickers and donations from trade show vendors.

Attendees will then travel to the Stonyfield Farm for a tour of the facility hosted by Nancy Hirschberg, Vice President of Natural Resources for Stonyfield Farm. Nancy oversees the environmental initiatives at Stonyfield, including working with organic farmers and suppliers. Before Stonyfield she worked with non-profits, business, and the federal government, on a farm and with the U.S. Forest Service in Alaska. Nancy enjoys her direct contact with the dairy farmers who supply Stonyfield, and she considers this the best part of her job. "They keep me grounded, give me hope and inspire me!" she says of the farmers. Once upon a time, Nancy dressed up as a dancing cup of yogurt for a consumer event, an experience she still claims was fun and she proudest of starting Stonyfield's organic program. Nancy, assisted by Stonyfield production managers, will lead the tour and answer any questions on the production challenges that organic processors face. The afternoon will end with a snack and discussion on processing and marketing of organic dairy products with Nancy and Stonyfield's marketing managers. Other processors that are attending the tour will be encouraged to share their experiences with the participants, too.

**NODPA thanks the supporters of the Field Days:** Don Faulkner and friends; HP Hood LLC; River Valley Fencing; PA Certified Organic; Upstate Farms Cooperative; NOFA VT; Acres USA; Dairy Marketing Services; Fertrell and NOFA/NY.

**NODPA also thanks those companies that have provided donations** including Horizon Organic Dairy; Organic Valley; HP Hood LLC; Washington Homeopathic Products; Stonyfield Farm; Barts Homemade and Celletech Ltd.

(See registration form on back page)

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## From The NODPA Desk

*By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

Where to start – flooding and a wet spring; melt-down in the Middle East; abuse of organic certification by rogue certifiers; gas at well over \$3 per gallon; bombs in India, Pakistan, North Korea and now the Big Dig starts to dig again!

As the old proverb says: concentrate on what you can do something about.

The flooding and wet weather have wreaked havoc for farmers in the Northeast in ways that can't be immediately remedied. Some conventional dairies affected by the weather may not have the incentive to start again with record low milk prices and a downward curve in prices that is predicted to last another year. Organic dairies have unique problems recovering from flooding and extremes of weather with the added constraints for satisfying the requirements of certification. We anticipated questions about the effect that flooding may have on certification, with some questions posed to certifiers in an article in this issue.

NODPA has set up a fund to provide relief for farmers affected by the extremes of weather this year and possibly in future years. We have already received money and product to be distributed quickly to help those most in need and we are working with Farm Aid to access greater resources. Charity and giving begin at home, so I hope that consumers, farmers, businesses and other organizations will respond to this need in our organic community.

Over the past few months, NODPA members have expressed concern in two areas; one, the most recent ruling by National Organic Program (NOP) on dairy herd replacements, and two, the practices of some certifiers. The ruling leaves a very confusing two track system, and many different ways to interpret the rule (see Kathie Arnold's article). To address both of these concerns, Kathie Arnold, Emily Brown Rosen and I met with Barbara Robinson, Deputy Administrator of Transportation and Marketing at the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and Mark Bradley, Associate Deputy Administrator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Transportation and Marketing Programs, National Organic Program (NOP) in late June. We had a frank and friendly conversation in rain soaked DC. Barbara and Mark recognize that farmers are confused and frustrated from

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*(Continued from the NODPA Desk, page 4)*

the last rulemaking and the length of time it's taken to complete the rulemaking on effective and enforceable pasture standards. They are keen to move quickly to provide clarity and direction with the desire and expectation that the whole process will be completed by June 2007. NOP will be looking at the economic impact on the organic livestock sector of having one universal rule for all organically certified livestock operations, and having enforceable standards for grazing on quality pasture which provides significant nutrient intake. We also discussed the enforcement issues in order to ensure the integrity of the organic seal. Mark Bradley confirmed that they are investigating complaints made by producers and consumers about certifiers, and will act when they find that the complaints are justified. Any concerns about producers should be made to their certifier and any concerns about certifiers should be made directly to the NOP. I hope that this gives everybody encouragement and/or warning that by June 2007 we will have some solid rules in place with plenty of advice on interpretation. While we will continue to hold the NOP's feet to the fire to deliver as they are promising, it is up to all of us to maintain high standards and work with our partners, certifiers, processors, and neighbors to maintain high

levels of integrity that will ensure the long term health and economic stability of organic dairy farmers.

Everybody will have the opportunity to talk directly to Mark Bradley at the upcoming NODPA Field Days on August 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at University of New Hampshire (UNH). Mark has agreed to be the keynote speaker on Friday evening and will take questions, so come prepared. The Field Days feature the great work that UNH is doing in creating their organic dairy, and the tour on Friday afternoon will be the first they host for any group of farmers. This work is built on the enthusiasm of Chuck Schwab and the stoic determination of Kevin Brussell, ably supported by Peggy Sullivan and Tom Kelly who have created a team to bring the dream to reality. Gary and Nancy Hirshberg have led the fundraising drive, with donations from their Foundation and by hosting many meetings with the leaders of the organic dairy community. As happens many times, it is the generosity of individuals, varying from small amounts to over a hundred thousand dollars that has started to put enough money in the bank to schedule the building of an ambitious facility. Perhaps the example of those few individuals will open the coffers of those corporations and cooperatives that project great profits from a strong organic market.

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## NODPA's Farmer Emergency Fund

*By Ed Maltby*

### Do you need assistance or can you donate money?

"The amount of damage and the extent of flooding are the most seen in 30 years," said Larry Sommers, the deputy field coordinator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in New York State. Floodwaters swept through parts of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania "with a destructive force not experienced in decades," with most of the worst effects being felt in rural communities.

The recent flooding has brought to a head one of the wettest Springs on record for the Northeast, and many organic dairy farmers have suffered significant losses through flooding, poor harvests of spoiled forage, an inability to plant forage corn and re-seed pasture, and physical losses of feed, income, equipment, machinery and animals through flooding.

The art of organic dairy farming relies on many years of work to build the quality of the soil and the health of dairy cows. This can be washed away in hours or be threatened by inadequate forage for systems that have succeeded in creating a balance with their surrounding environment. Organic farmers can not resort to chemicals, antibiotics, or buy readily available conventional feed for their animals and land to solve problems caused by the weather. These problems need to be approached by possibly using new methods of organic production; the purchase of expensive and scarce organic feeds, and the re-establishment of the natural balance within their farm that the flooding and wet weather has disrupted. NODPA, working with Farm Aid and Community Alliance for Interdependent Agriculture, have started a fund to assist organic dairy farmers in rebuilding their family farms through direct grants, technical service and one-to one consultant services. Thanks to seed money from Lakeview Organic Grain, Twin Oaks Dairy LLC, Peter Miller, Lisa Englebert, Robert Perry and Paul Knapp, NODPA has over \$3,200 in seed money for the fund plus a pledge of two tractor trailer loads of hay.

The Fund has **three** goals:

- 1) To assist organic dairy farmers who have had their livelihood threatened by flooding or excessive wet weather in 2006.
- 2) Establish a program within NODPA that will assist organic dairy farmers in the northeast to survive excessive weather related events that threaten their sustainability.
- 3) Engage all stakeholders of the organic dairy industry in collaborating to save organically certi-

fied family dairy farms that have been affected by extreme weather.

If you need assistance or can offer help, please contact Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342. Tel: 413-772-0444 or email at [ednodpa@comcast.net](mailto:ednodpa@comcast.net).

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We are looking at two great days for those that attend the Field Days. With Hue Karreman and Gary Zimmer, we have some great presenters with deep knowledge of organic production, who are very prepared to answer questions and are looking forward to meeting many farmers. After Mark Bradley's speech on Friday, we will have NODPA's annual meeting where you will have the opportunity to create the agenda for NODPA's activities and priorities in the coming years. If you can not make it, send me your comment and opinions and I will add them to the mix. To complete the event on Saturday afternoon, Nancy Hirshberg had generously opened the door to the Stonyfield facility and will personally direct a tour through the plant, taking questions and educating us all about how they produce such a quality product from high quality organic and conventional milk.

Looking forward, we can pray for world peace and urge our leaders to put aside their egos and create new agreements and treaties to maintain peace and save the lives of countless innocent bystanders.

For our own future, we need to work together as a community to build bridges and create (perhaps uneasy) alliances to ensure that we finally have universal high standards for access to pasture and breeding of replacements. Many forecasters predict that these two issues have become pivotal in maintaining the confidence of consumers that the USDA organic seal has integrity that can be enforced. With that confidence will come a stable market with farmgate prices that will return a livable wage for farm families with the same average return on investment that conventional dairies earn in the Northeast, (approximately 4% based on Farm Credit statistics over the last five years).

As always if you have any questions, comments or requests, call 413-772-0444 or email me at [emaltby@comcast.net](mailto:emaltby@comcast.net). ♦

### NORTHEAST ORGANIC DAIRY PRODUCERS ALLIANCE

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To enable organic family dairy farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.

(Continued from Farmer Emergency Fund page 6)

### Horizon Organic

With nearly 250 organic dairy farmers in the Northeast, Horizon Organic is fully aware of how the heavy rainfall during the past couple months has impacted family farmers. We intend to stick with them to sustain their livelihood now and in the future. Cindy Masterman, Producer Relations Manager Horizon Organic, 888-648-8377

### DMS

As a major supplier of organic milk, Dairy Marketing Services (DMS) is very concerned about the damage done by heavy rainfall recently, and will work diligently to help all those affected.

DMS is doing everything it can to communicate and emphasize the immediate need for assistance for farms affected by the floods. Letters have been sent to federal and state government officials expressing the need for funds to cover milk, crop and livestock losses. DMS continues to make it a top priority to keep elected officials informed of the hardships encountered by the dairy industry as a result of this natural disaster.

DMS is an advocate for you on the local, state and federal levels. We know our members' main concern is to get their farms back in working order and to help those in their community during this time of need.

Tracy Trudell, Dairy Marketing Services  
1-800-654-8838 x5598



A view of the Engelbert Farm in Nichols, NY after the Susquehanna River had retreated about 8 inches from the record breaking level reached on June 29th.

### HP Hood

HP Hood would like to express its concern and gratitude to the many farmers who have been affected by the recent heavy rainfall in the Northeast region.

Hood will continue to work closely with our suppliers to ensure that your needs and concerns are being addressed as quickly as possible. We are proud to support you and grateful for your hard work and efforts during this most difficult time and always. Lynne Bohan, HP Hood LLC, 617-887-8321

### Organic Valley

Organic Valley is dedicated to providing ongoing support for our farmer-members suffering damage and loss due to the severe rainfall that has occurred in the Northeast. Our Northeast Dairy Pool

Coordinator, Peter Miller, is in contact with our farmer-members in the region to identify farmer needs and coordinate relief efforts in conjunction with our home office. We plan to utilize our Art Wedig Disaster Relief Fund to the extent possible and will coordinate community support and local fundraising efforts as needed. Peter Miller can be reached by email at [peter.miller@organicvalley.coop](mailto:peter.miller@organicvalley.coop) or by phone (802) 254-8310. ♦

## New Dairy Transition Rules in Place; Dairy Replacement Dual Track Continues

*By Kathie Arnold*

Dairy farms that begin to transition a herd to organic production can no longer use 20% non-organic feed during the first 9 months of a dairy herd's transition to organic production—the 20% allowance can only be used by those farms that began their one year herd transition before June 9<sup>th</sup> of 2006. Any dairy farms now starting a herd transition must, for the whole year of herd transition, use certified organic or certifiable feeds, or third year transition crop that is grown on land under their organic farm plan. In essence, the new rule will allow a farm's dairy animals

to transition along with the third year of land transition.

In keeping with both the requirements of the Harvey Court Ruling and last fall's amendments to the Organic Foods and Production Act (OFPA) by Congress, the National Organic Program (NOP) issued this final rule on dairy herd transition on June 7, 2006.

Most of the organic community had hoped that the NOP could use this rule change to fix the longstanding dichotomy in the rule on dairy replacement animals that has been interpreted to allow some organic dairy operations to bring in conventionally raised replacement heifers one year from milk production, whereas other farm's replacement animals and all on-farm raised youngstock are required to be organic from the last third of gestation. This has long been

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(Continued from Transition Rule, page 7)

seen as both an unfair and unlevel playing field for producers and also a breach of the consumer trust, who believe organic dairy animals are being raised organically. Prior to the June 2006 regulation change, the NOP's interpretation, given the rule wording and formatting, was that only farms that used the 80/20 dairy herd transition are subject to the requirement that all replacement animals be organic from the last third of gestation. According to the NOP, all other operations, including those transitioned before Oct. 2002, only needed to purchase replacements to be under organic management for 12 months prior to milk production.

Most major dairy certifiers across the country (all the NOFA's, MOFGA, PCO, MOSA, and Oregon Tilth), however, have required all replacement animals to be organic from the last third of gestation, following the intent stated in the preamble to the rule. However, Colorado Department of Agriculture, who certifies Aurora Organic Dairy (AOD), apparently has been allowing AOD to bring replacement animals onto their Colorado operation that were conventionally raised until yearlings, even though AOD transitioned that herd using the 80/20 allowance (confirmed to me by Clark Driftmier, Vice President of Marketing at AOD in July of 2004).

**The new rule will allow a farm's dairy animals to transition along with the third year of land transition.**

Certifier QAI has also long been allowing Horizon Organic to send off their organic calves and then bring conventionally raised heifers onto their Idaho operation. That operation did begin organic production before the federal rule was in place so does fall under the NOP's interpretation of able to bring in replacements that have only been under organic management for one year prior to milk production. Joe Scalzo,

President of Horizon, stated on a 5/22/06 Odairy listserve post that starting in September Horizon will begin raising their calves on their Idaho facility.

Ray Green, Supervisor of the California Organic Program, proclaimed some time ago that all California organic dairy operations have the right to transition conventional animals and had told certifiers that they cannot require that replacements be organic from the last third of gestation. California certifier CCOF, however, has recently put forth a policy saying that "*a 'herd' will be defined as the animals that are within the organic system plan, as of October 31, 2006*" and will require that all replacements be organic from the last third of gestation on all operations, "*both currently certified operations and new applicants*".

In response to their proposed rule issued in April, the NOP received nearly 13,000 comments requesting closure of this loophole that allows conventionally

(Continued on page 9)



**Stonyfield Farm**  
ORGANIC

**Thank you,  
organic dairy farmers,  
for all that you do.**

**From all the folks at Stonyfield Farm**

Products shown: Whatababy, Stonyfield Farm Organic, Moo-la-la, Smoothie.



(Continued from Transition Rule, page 8)

raised youngstock to be brought onto some organic dairy operations and converted to organic. The NOP reported that they were advised by USDA attorneys that this rule change could only deal with the very narrow focus of the Harvey Court Ruling and the OFPA Amendment changes. However, the NOP has issued statements saying that they recognize that the current dual track for replacements is a concern for the organic community and they have committed to issue an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) on dairy replacements. In a conversation on 6/27, Barbara Robinson, Deputy Administrator of Transportation and Marketing at the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, stated that the NOP will issue an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking about dairy replacement in September of this year, voicing the expectation that the whole process will be completed by early June of 2007.

Ms. Robinson explained that the reason for going through the process of an ANPR, rather than going directly to proposed rulemaking, is to allow full discussion and questioning of all aspects of the organic

**The NOP will issue an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking about dairy replacement in September of this year.**

regulation that might impact dairy replacement animals. She said that it seems that never intended rule loopholes are being 'found' by operations and the NOP wants to ensure that, once rule re-writing on dairy replacement animals is completed, there will be no new loopholes discovered. The example Ms Robinson brought up was the current provision for bringing non-organic breeder stock onto farms—could this be used as a loophole to continue to convert non-organic livestock on existing organic operations? She stressed that it is important for both producers and certifiers to read the organic regulations in their entirety and to connect all the dots, rather than reading one little section and taking it out of the context of the whole regulation. She also stressed the need for good, thorough organic systems plans for all organic operations.

For the time being, the official interpretation (6/6/06 NOP Q & A for Harvey Final Rule) is that *"for producers who convert an entire distinct herd, the final regulation requires all dairy replacement animals to be organic from the last third of gestation. But pro-*

(Continued on page 10)

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(Continued from Transition Rules, page 9)

ducers who convert less than an entire herd are required to manage dairy animals for not less than 12 months." As an organic community, let us hope that this is indeed fixed in a short time frame for it is unfortunate that those farms who make a less than full commitment to organic production—by having a split herd—are given the economic break of being allowed to bring in conventionally raised replacement animals and are allowed to put our consumer's trust in jeopardy.

The NOP did reiterate in our meeting on June 27 that organic animals that are moved to conventional management can never return to organic status per regulation 205.236(b)(1). Therefore, on farm born and raised organic animals must be managed organically throughout their upbringing to maintain their organic status. They were also clear that any herd that was converted using the 80/20 feed exemption must use replacement animals that are organic from the last third of gestation.

Based on the number of comments received in favor of last third of gestation, it would be wise for producers to begin making that adjustment now, given the NOP's timetable for rulemaking and the likelihood that this will be part of a proposed rule. ♦

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## **What Do The Masai Warriors Of Kenya And Horizon Organic Have In Common?**

*By Shannon Horst, Executive Director,  
Holistic Management International*

They are both working with Holistic Management International (HMI) to improve grazing productivity and soil health.

In the autumn of 2005, Horizon Organic began partnering with HMI, formerly The Savory Center, which is a not-for-profit founded by Allan Savory, a native of Zimbabwe and one of the world's foremost experts on holistic management. The primary objective of HMI is to restore land in ways that benefit the social, economic and environmental health of their communities.

The first HMI project work began with HMI helping Horizon Organic design and develop a grazing plan for the new land and facility at the original company dairy in Paul, Idaho, where half the cattle from the

*(Continued on page 12)*

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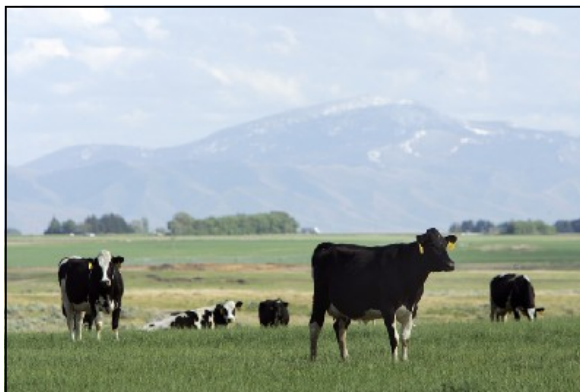
(Continued from Holistic Management, page 11)

existing facility will relocate to this autumn. It has since expanded to include new thinking and improvements to pastures at the existing dairy in Idaho. We look forward to rolling out HMI's expertise through the HOPE program, founded in 2001 to provide educational and financial support, to our producer partners.

The organization's staff has taught Horizon Organic much and we'd like to share these lessons learned with NODPA members. Shannon Horst of HMI answers the following questions posed by Ed Maltby of NODPA:

*What is Holistic Management as it applies to organic dairy enterprises?*

Holistic Management is a planning and decision making framework that helps farmers and ranchers increase natural productivity of their pastures and entire operations. As it applies to dairies, it is not different from how it would apply to other operations. It is a process that farms of all sizes can embrace so that de-



cisions are increasingly sound – environmentally, socially and financially.

*Q. Why and how is Horizon Organic using this holistic approach in developing its farming enterprises?*

A. Horizon Organic wants to set the gold standard in understanding and managing the relationship between the animals, the land (soil, water, plants) and the overall productivity and health of its dairies. Horizon Organic has contracted with HMI to assist in achieving that objective across its milk supply. Additionally, HMI has, as one aspect of the overall decision making framework, a process for planning grazing that has a long and successful track record in creating increased natural and irrigated pasture productivity.

*Q. What are the long and short term goals for the management of the Horizon Organic owned dairies?*

A. The short-term goals have been:

1) To work with staff who oversee the new and the existing dairy in Paul, ID;

(Continued on page 13)



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(Continued from *Holistic Management*, page 12)

- A) Example #1: design a grazing plan for the new dairy and make improvements to grazing at the existing dairy
- B) Example #2: implement low-stress livestock handling techniques as pioneered by Bud Williamson

2) To use Holistic Management to design the new dairy so that the design is as financially, socially and environmentally sound as possible and the infrastructure supports the Holistic Management planned grazing principles, and train the staff at the dairy operations to use the Holistic Management decision making to keep the dairy continually moving in a direction of social, financial and environmental prosperity.

B: The long-term goals:

Improve biodiversity; Improve health and productivity of native rangelands that are non-irrigated; Increase the permeability and water retention capability of the soil. The goal is to set the gold standard for organic dairy pasture management, especially (but not exclusively) as it applies to the larger dairies.

*Q. Holistic management is based on building biodiversity. How is this implemented with large herds of cows?*

A. Holistic Management is based on producing a product or service while replenishing the resources used to produce that product/service to achieve a particular quality of life one is seeking.

To produce a high quality organic milk product while managing the health of the land and animals takes very careful planning, monitoring and re-planning. The Holistic Management process helps people take each of their decisions (which will lead to certain actions) and pass it through some filters that help the farmer or rancher to truly consider the social, biological and financial ramifications of their actions. The result is that the farmer/ rancher plans and manages an operation that is increasingly regenerative. If monitoring indicates this is not true, then the management team has to re-plan what they are doing and Holistic Management has tools to help them do that.

On any operation, animal numbers are not the key component of what produces healthy grasslands/pastures. The key component is the recovery time that the plants are allowed. It actually helps to have large numbers of animals in higher density, provided the plants have sufficient recovery time and the dairy can still meet the daily nutrition needs of the animals as well. It really is a balancing act that Holistic Management's planning tools have proven to address. ♦

#### Company Farm#1: Idaho

**Location:** Paul, Idaho near the Snake River & Twin Falls

**Year Certified Organic:** 1995

**Total Certified Organic Acres:** 7,800

**Herd Size:** About 4,000

**Recently Transitioned Acres:** 2,500

**Total Pasture:** 3,700

**# of Certified Organic Acres Converted in Idaho for dairy and feed:** 30,000

**# of Certified Organic Independent Farms Supplying Ingredient/Feed Supply:** 80

**Third-party Certifier:** QAI

**Current Milking Parlors:** 1

**Future Milking Parlors in 2007:** 2

**Plans for Herd Growth:** None

**Unique Practices:** 100% Manure Composted on Site and Work with Holistic Management International, Inc. to Restore Native Grassland

#### Company Farm #2: Maryland

**Location:** Kennedyville, Maryland, near the Chesapeake Bay

**Year Certified Organic:** 1998

**Total Certified Organic Acres:** 760

**Herd Size:** About 500

**Total Pasture:** 200

**# of Certified Organic Acres Converted in Maryland for dairy and feed:** 3,000

**# of Certified Organic Independent Farms Supplying Ingredient/Feed Supply:** 5

**Third-party Certifier:** QAI

**Current Milking Parlors:** 1

**Plans for Herd Growth:** None

**Unique Practices:** New state-of-the-art maternity barn; farm serves as educational site for members of Congress, farmers and foreign dignitaries

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## UNH Organic Dairy Farm Update

*By Peggy Sullivan, Chuck Schwab and Kevin Brussell*  
*UNH Organic Dairy Research Farm*

### Program Update Highlights

- Herd acquired and bred
- \$829,000 USDA grant (UMaine is lead institution)
- \$25,000 NRCS grant
- 28-member Advisory Board established
- Executive committee in the process of being formed
- Site survey completed
- Building design in progress; RFP is almost complete
- Fund raising in high gear

**The Heifers** -48 Jersey heifers are in transition and are doing absolutely great. Dairy Management students monitor weight gains and body conditions of the animals. A nutritionist with Balchem, Inc. stops in the first of every month to check on the animals, and Dr. Hue Karreman, an organic veterinarian from PA who is one of our off-campus consultants, and our staff veterinarian follow the animals closely.

Breeding started March 7 and five heifers remain open. We are on target for shipping the first load of organic milk on December 30, the day that the first 36 animals will be certified organic. The remaining 12 animals will be certified organic 6 days later.

We hope to add another 25-30 animals later this year, but all of these will have to come from organic farms. The goal will be to get animals that are of an age, or stage of lactation (if they are older and already in milk), that can be bred in late fall or early winter. This is important so that some of our herd will eventually be calving during the late summer or early fall months. We certainly don't need any more animals that will be calving in December and January!

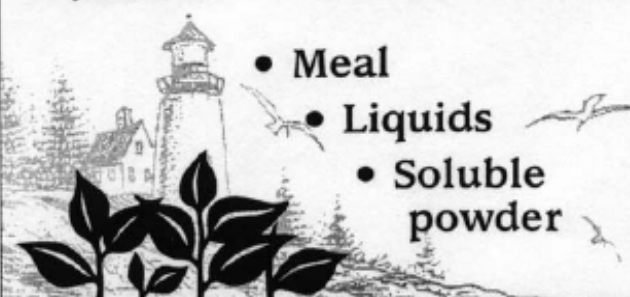
**Fencing** was installed this spring. Much of the fencing materials were donated and UNH Dairy Management students helped to install the fencing.

**Harvest** -Like everyone else, we are coping with the wet weather conditions. But, have put up 22 tons of first cut grass hay and about 34 tons of Alfalfa/grass baleage for the heifers. We have planted 10 acres of organic corn for corn silage, 8 acres of Triticale and 10 acres of BMR Sorgam-Sudan. We also have 25 acres of new seeding Alfalfa/Rye Grass/Timothy to harvest.

**The barn** is designed to be an "open air" and "low

*(Continued on page 15)*


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(Continued from UNH Organic Dairy Farm Update, page 14)

stress” environment with flexibility for managing the cows on different types of bedded packs (composting or conventional), the option of installing free stalls in half or all of the barn, and the option of feeding the cows in groups or individually, depending on the needs of the nutrition and feeding studies that are conducted. In short, the barn provides for maximum flexibility for research and demonstration, the cows should be super happy in it, and its spacious feeding alley and clean and inviting environment should be equally liked by visitors, workers and researchers.

**The Barn and Milking Center design plans will be available when NODPA members tour the farm. We hope to receive your input on the design.**

Like the barn, the **milking center** has an “open air” and “low stress” environment throughout the parlor, holding area and hospital area for the cows. Others features include:

1) a spacious (40 x 20 ft) and inviting lobby with great space for displays and for larger groups of people to assemble, 2) open area for visitors to watch cows being milked, 3) a scrape down holding area and alley way to minimize water usage, 4) a conference room for 15-20 people, and 5) an office large enough for the farm manager or herdsman to meet with 2-3 people.

#### **Request for proposal (RFP) design package**

The RFP for the project should be released by the end of the month. We hope to be able to construct both the barn and the milking center, but we can only construct what we have secured sufficient gifts or pledges of support for. We hope to stay on schedule and have a place to milk the Jerseys when they start calving the first of December. Many thanks to McFarland-Johnson, Inc. in Concord NH for making this project a priority and for getting all of the site design work done in such a timely fashion.

We estimate that approximately \$1,100,000 is needed to construct the barn and milking center (about \$600,000 for the milking center about \$400,000 for the barn, and the rest for site work). While these costs may seem excessive, these buildings are not standard facilities. We have designed low cost facilities that will incorporate as many of the elements of a commercial facility as possible without sacrificing the space and flexibility required to meet the needs of research and education.

**Research** -15 Organic dairy farmers from each of the Northeast states sit on the farm’s advisory board. The research agenda will be farmer driven and the farm will be a demonstration site doing farm based research that duplicates production conditions on

Northeast dairy farms. **We seek input from NODPA members on the research agenda and hope their visit to the organic dairy farm will help to further define the research agenda.**

#### **Identified Research Priorities:**

1. Alternate cropping systems and their impact on herd nutrition, reliance on imported grains, farm profitability, nutrient cycling, soil health, and weed management
2. Methods for increasing efficiency of use of forages
3. Alternatives to grain
4. Methods for enhancing the health promoting properties of milk
5. Evaluation of alternative therapies for infections and disease
6. Innovative husbandry practices
7. Improved management practices for grazing and forage systems
8. Comparison of bedded pack materials and management systems
9. Animal preference, health and comfort in free stall vs. bedded pack systems
10. Comparative studies on confinement vs. extensive grazing
11. Natural reproduction vs. artificial insemination

(Continued on page 16)

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(Continued from UNH Organic Dairy Farm Update, page 15)

### Research activity to date:

- ARS, University Park, PA and Maine, is collaborating on soil testing. ARS used GPS technology to gather baseline information for nutrient management tracking and have done vegetation mapping, as well. GPS will allow us to use soil from exactly the same location over time.
- Dorothy Perkins, Educational Program Coordinator for UNH Cooperative Extension, and an accomplished herbalist, inventoried all of the plant species on the farm to identify what the farm might have for medicinal health care for the cattle. She is also coordinating an effort whereby fecal samples are being collected from all of the heifers at time of breeding for analysis of parasites. This information will be used as base data for future studies examining the relationship between increased plant biodiversity and parasite load. Future herbal studies could include increasing milk production using herbs, controlling scours using native species, etc.

University of Maine agronomists have evaluated the 2005 forage seedlings that were planted last fall. They will also GPS the farm for land resources so they can begin to track soil fertility and plant growth responses in the months and years to follow.

**Fundraising** -The lead donor is Stonyfield Farm. But, we have made great progress and received gifts, grants or pledges from a variety of people, organizations, foundations and companies. We continue to work hard towards raising the remaining funds in order to build the barn and milking center before the calving begins.

- Progress to date: \$305,000 raised in cash & pledges with an additional \$450,000 pledged, but not yet finalized!
- trucking costs for cattle transport and cattle finders fee
- 6 heifers and 8 discounted heifers
- semen and breeding supplies
- feed mixing and mill processing equipment
- 15 ton of grain and grain combine

### Public Relations and Public Support

In Dairy Nutrition Management Professor Chuck Schwab's 31 years at UNH, he reports that he has never been involved in an initiative that has generated as much interest as the organic dairy farm. So much has been written, in such a short period of time. Arti-

cles have appeared in numerous newspapers including the Boston Globe, the Portsmouth Herald, the Daily Democrat, the Union Leader, and the Lawrence-Eagle Tribune. There have been two spots on New Hampshire Public Radio. Several articles have also appeared in a variety of agricultural and breed publications and newsletters.

We also have been invited to speak at several farm meetings including the Maine Organic Milk Producers Meeting, the Vermont Jersey Breeders Association Meeting, the Northeast Sustainable Livestock Conference, the Granite State Dairy Promotion Annual Meeting, the Northeast Pasture Research and Extension

Consortium Meeting, and the NOFA-NH Winter Conference.

We highlight this media attention because it is generating a lot of public support for the need to bring new life to our agricultural programs in the northeast, farmers and students are getting more and more excited about the role that the farm can play in the preservation of northeast agriculture, and farmers are encouraged by the fact that it now appears that the universities care about their welfare and are now reaching out

to help them.

The number of people calling or emailing as to how they can help (by making a small cash gift, by contributing products, or by helping in other ways), wanting to talk about the farm, wanting more information about the farm, wanting specific types of information about organic farming, wanting to have us conduct research with their organic products, wanting to work at the farm, etc., continues to increase. Once the buildings are constructed and the farm becomes operational, there is no doubt that the farm will be a huge draw for the public.

**Website** -The website for the organic dairy farm is live, [www.organicdairy.unh.edu](http://www.organicdairy.unh.edu). Please take a look and give us your feedback...it will remain a work in progress for some time. The primary reason for getting the website up now is so we have a better way of communicating with people about the initiative, our progress, how they can help, etc.

### Other Activities and Announcements

- Preliminary efforts are underway to bring our university colleagues from throughout the northeast to UNH to tour our campus farms, to see the site for the organic farm, and then to meet informally to talk about developing a regional academic plan in organic

**Our principal mission is teaching and it is important that we make every attempt to share our regional expertise in a way that strengthens and maximizes our efforts and provides what the next generation of farmers need, in a cost effective way.**

(Continued on page 17)



*(Continued from UNH Organic Dairy Farm Update, page 16)*

agriculture. Our principal mission is teaching and it is important that we make every attempt to share our regional expertise in a way that strengthens and maximizes our efforts and provides what the next generation of farmers need, in a cost effective way.

Bill Trumble, the Dean of the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture and Director of the NH Agricultural Experiment Station, has committed to initiate a new multi-state (Regional) Agricultural Experiment Station research project centered on the new organic dairy. Objectives of the project will include research efforts on 1) improved organic forages and feeds, 2) maintaining organic animal health, 3) assessments of health and nutritional benefits of organic milk, and 4) economic factors in organic production. This project has received verbal support from most NE deans of agriculture, universities in the North Central region, support from the western region, as well as interest from Canada (University of Guelph).

**Thank you NODPA! We look forward to hosting your Field Days and anxiously await your visit to the Organic Dairy Farm. See you next month. ♦**



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## History Of Organic Milk in Vermont

*By Bob Parsons and Riva Rondorf*

When Jack and Anne Lazor began making stove-top yogurt from their cows' organic milk in 1979, they did not realize they were early pioneers in what has become a \$329 million industry. Living in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, they distributed their yogurt door-to-door to 25 families in the area, expanding to two stoves by 1982. During this time, organic was an unconventional idea with informal standards; generally, organic meant pesticide-free. The Northeast Organic Farmers' Association of VT (NOFA-VT) was founded in 1971 and formalized their certification process around 1985. The Organic Foods Production Association of North America (which later became the Organic Trade Association) was founded in 1985. Vermonters Joe Smillie and Grace Gershuny compiled an initial set of organic standards for OFPANA in 1986 based on prevailing practices at the time. This document was circulated to fledgling organic organizations, and used by many as basis for certification standards.

Although the Lazors and their Butterworks Farm yogurt emerged first, Peter Young and Nancy Everheart's Hill Farm became Vermont's first certified organic dairy in 1986. Like Butterworks Farm, they milked their own one dozen jersey cows and distributed their product themselves. Driving a refrigerated truck twice a week to stores in Montpelier and Burlington, they sold their non-homogenized, farm pasteurized and bottled milk.

Although organic certification was occurring in a number of states, the organic industry and its certifying bodies were not well coordinated. Butterworks Farm was fined in 1982 and also in 1990 for licensing and distribution issues, although by 1987 they had been certified organic. After Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont introduced and helped pass the Organic Foods Production Act in 1990, coordination improved. No one yet realized it, but the rate of organic dairy growth in Vermont was about to increase following the passage of this act. One of the main catalysts for this was the Flints.

One of New England's most recognizable organic dairy brands, Organic Cow, was started by Peter and Bunny Flint around 1990. Initially producing organic cheese, the Flints moved into fluid milk in 1994 to improve their cash flow. They built a plant for homogenizing and pasteurizing the milk and became the

*(Continued on page 18)*

*(Continued from History of Organic Milk in Vermont, page 17)*

first New England buyers of bulk, organic milk. At the start, they processed milk from their own 70 cow herd and milk from three or four other Vermont farms. With a strong consumer response, they expanded into different products and increased their market range. To meet this supply, they needed more farms. They offered advice and support during the certification process, building their business on strong relationships, and by 1997 were buying milk from approximately 40 farms.

Despite consumer loyalty and good working relationships, Organic Cow was experiencing market pressure from their competitors. Based in Wisconsin, the Coulee Region Organic Producers Pool (CROPP) had farmer members in Vermont and Maine, and their Organic Valley label was popular. Horizon Organics, started in 1992 in Boulder, Colorado, to produce organic yogurt, had quickly expanded to fluid milk and other dairy products and was rapidly growing. Hoping to secure themselves in the market they helped create, Organic Cow joined with regional northeast processor Hood, LLP, selling a majority of the company to them late in 1997. Few changes arose from the transaction until 1999 when Hood sold Organic Cow to the now publicly-traded Horizon. A corporate organic dairy industry had emerged.

Organic Cow's farmers responded to the sale in different ways. Forgue Family Farm and others got CROPP involved in Vermont; some farmers stayed with Horizon, many taking a cut in their contract price; and others like Rock Bottom Farm (Strafford Creamery label) began processing their own organic dairy products. These three distinct responses presaged the appearance of the organic dairy industry today.

Today in the U.S. there are small organic dairy producers like Butterworks and Rock Bottom Farms in Vermont; cooperatives like CROPP with members nationwide; and corporate producers like Horizon Organics that increasingly purchase milk from western farms. Vermont expects to have 128 certified organic dairy farms by October of 2006, which will be approximately 10 percent of their total dairy farms. Currently, this is the second highest percentage of organic dairy farms in any state. Always a dairy state, Vermont is continuing to increase its numbers in an industry where some feel that going organic is the only way to survive.

*Note: This is a working research project, and if you have additional information, or believe that anything here is inaccurate, please contact [riva.rondorf@uvm.edu](mailto:riva.rondorf@uvm.edu) ♦*

## Certified Organic Only Auction

*By Connie Frasier*

We are pleased to announce that there will be a 100% certified organic auction on October 7, 2006 at 11:00 AM to be held in Mohawk, NY.

We have realized that there is a need in this area for a consignment auction of certified organic products. These products must have proper paperwork presented with each item or animal. We can't stress enough the fact that organic certification paperwork is essential—anything to be consigned must be certified. The organic producers will play a huge role in the success of this activity, and you all deserve this to be successful.

The auction will be held in a large, clean, bio-secure facility that has not had any animals in it for many years.

We are looking forward to a fun filled day for everyone. There will be many donated door prizes, a food concession stand, many baked goods for sale and lots of laughter. You can be a consignor, buyer, or a spectator.

Please call with your consignments and help make this auction a huge success. Livestock and produce are all welcome. The auction will be hosted by Frasier Farm, 217 Upper Deck Rd., Mohawk, NY 13407, 1-315-823-0912. Auctioneer will be Frank Walker, Franklin, NY, 1-607-829-5172.

Please call us if you would like to place a consignment or just have questions. We look forward to hearing from you all. ♦

---

## Grass (Forage) Fed Livestock and Meat Products Comment Period

**All Comments Must Be Received By August 10, 2006**

"Grass (Forage) Fed -- Grass (annual and perennial), forbs (legumes, brassicas), browse, forage, or stockpiled forages, and post-harvest crop residue without separated grain shall be at least 99 percent of the energy source for the lifetime of the ruminant specie, with the exception of milk consumed prior to weaning. Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen.

Grass (forage) fed claims will be verified, as provided in 7 CFR part 62, by a feeding protocol that confirms a grass or forage-based diet that is 99 percent or higher."

The original standard (2002 notice) required that grass, green or rangepasture, or forage shall be 80 percent or more of the primary energy source throughout the animal's life cycle. A detailed discussion of the suggested limitations of the original definition and the rationale for the proposed change is presented in the Federal Register (Vol. 71, No. 92, Pages 27662-27665, May 12, 2006; or on the website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/stand/st-pubs.htm>). Written comments should be submitted to Martin E. O'Connor, Chief, Standardization Branch, Livestock and Seed Program, AMS, USDA, Room 2607-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, Washington, DC 20250-0254. Comments may also be sent by fax to 202.720.1112, by e-mail to [marketingclaim@usda.gov](mailto:marketingclaim@usda.gov), or via the Internet at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Refer to Docket No. LS-05-09. ♦

# Organic Production

## Feature Farm

### Taconic End, Farm Leicester, VT Catlin Fox, Annie Claghorn

by Lisa McCrory

Inspired by relatives on both sides of the family, Catlin and Annie are first generation farmers, setting an example of how to farm on a small scale and do it well. This year will be the 20th year that they have been dairying on their farm in Leicester, Vermont.

When asked what attracted them to farming, both had a story to tell; Catlin's grandfather was a homesteader in Michigan and he was enamored by the stories of life on his grandfather's farm. Working with the land and being so closely connected and dependent on Mother Nature seemed like the only real lifestyle choice for him. Annie was introduced to farming through her uncle and from this experience, she knew that her calling was to work with the land, raise animals, and grow her own food. Together, Catlin and Annie purchased Taconic End Farm in 1986, got their land certified organic, and dove right into living off a diversified farming income. Enterprises included a herd of 24 registered Jerseys, a market garden, garlic, and growing squash for Deep Root. Today, they no longer cater to vegetable markets, milk 30 registered Jerseys and ship their milk to Organic Valley.

Taconic End Farm consists of 90 acres of open land used for pasture and hay. The farm has always been a grass farm and they give a lot of credit to a local celebrity by the name of Bill Murphy, author of 'Greener Pastures on Your Side of the Fence'. Bill Murphy worked at UVM, teaching Voisin's rotational grazing, doing research on grazing management, and eventually commandeering a staff of 5 people who traveled to farms providing grazing technical assistance, and facilitating pasture walks & discussion groups.

**Seasonal Dairy**— In 1993 Annie and Catlin heard Larry Shearer (a producer in Massachusetts) speak at a workshop about seasonal dairying. He shared his methodology and the economics behind it – and they were sold. They had a spring-seasonal herd (milking late March – mid January) by 1995 and have not looked back. Seasonal dairying works well for this farm because they can make the most milk when the cows are on pasture, can feed a low protein grain, as there is plenty of protein in the pasture, and they are in sync with a seasonal cycle. They are busiest as the days get longer with down time during the darkest coldest time

of the year. Though they try to harvest the nicest hay possible for their cows, the pressure is not as high as their cows are dry for a good portion of the winter feeding. Some of the challenges with seasonal dairying are making sure all the cows and heifers get bred within a particular window of time. There are always a few that don't stay within the calving window and those animals

are sold as dairy stock in the fall or winter when income from milk sales are low to non-existent. "You must be ruthless about who goes and who stays", says Annie. This means there may be a favorite cow or calf who needs to be sold because they don't fit within the seasonal dairy plan. Another challenge with being a spring-seasonal dairy is that when they are busy with haying, they are also busy with calving and breeding and calf rearing.

**Transition to Organic**—in the midst of their change to seasonal milking, there was a market for organic milk developing in the state and The Organic Cow of Vermont was looking for more producers. Catlin and Annie had been waiting for this market to reach their area. They started transitioning early in 1996 and were shipping organic milk later that year. The transition to organic production was relatively simple for this farm; they were already grazing their animals, had already been using homeopathy and other natural products for 4 years, and their land was already certified. In 1996, the transition to organic required 100% organic feed and management for 3 months (as opposed to 1 year with today's standards). Catlin and Annie transitioned their

(Continued on page 20)



L to R: Clement Warnier (French visitor), Catlin Fox, Annie Claghorn, Lewis Fox.

(Continued from Featured Farm—Taconic End Farm, page 19)

herd during the dry period and since their livestock health and management already met the standards, their transition was painless with little to no additional cost.

**Grazing System and Winter Feeding**—Catlin and Annie have always considered themselves to be grass-farmers; they make as much milk from grass as possible keeping their cost of production low and the cows happy and healthy. They like working with their cows and don't care much for machinery, so whenever the cows can harvest their own feed, Catlin and Annie are happy to facilitate the process. The cows, calves and heifers graze from mid-April to the end of October, receiving the majority of their feed from pasture. Over the years, their grazing system has gotten more sophisticated; they have a field that they use exclusively for pasturing their calves, use laneways, and make sure that there is water available in every paddock.

To supplement their pasture, the cows are fed 12 lbs of a 10% Protein 'high energy pellet' from Green Mountain Feeds and kelp and salt is available free choice. Cows are given a new pasture after each milking and the dry cows and heifers follow the milkers in the grazing rotation as the clean-up group.

Calves are put out on pasture as soon as there is grass to graze – usually at about 6 weeks of age. They are raised in a group with electric fencing tape (more visible) and feed the calves by pouring the milk into a 50 gallon drum with peach teats all around the barrel. They graze exclusively on a piece of the farm where the cows do not graze to minimize exposure to parasites, and move the calves to a new paddock every 4 days. They supplement the pasture with an organic calf grain, kelp and Redmond salt and wean the calves at about 3 months of age. When the calves are drinking their milk, this is the time when Annie, Catlin or Lewis will spray some Ectophyte fly spray on the calves, and they will also make sure to put some fly spray on the udder and the ears. Not only does this keep the flies away, but it distracts the calves from sucking on one another right after the feeding frenzy.

In the wintertime, the cows and heifers are fed dry round bales outside with free choice kelp and salt.



When they are still milking, they are fed a 14% Protein grain and then zero grain during the dry period.

#### **Preventive Health Practices and Treatments**

Most of the time Annie turns to homeopathic remedies for treating her livestock, though she also uses a number of other products including garlic tincture, aloe, nutritional boluses for cows and calves (from Crystal Creek, IMPRO and Agri-Dynamics), calcium products for prevention of milk fever and, in cases of severe illness, Dr Karreman's herbal tincture formula called "Antibiotic Formula". She has been trying a new approach to prevention of milk fever using a homeopathic remedy

called Calc Phos (30 C potency). She gives Calc Phos to the cows one or two times at calving and has had great success and encourages others to try this out. Their vaccination program consists of vaccinating for Lepto before breeding, for pneumonia when the cows are dry and rabies before turnout in the spring.

For fly control Catlin and Annie decided to try using fly parasites through Spaulding Laboratories hoping to reduce the number of belly flies and

horn flies on their farm. Fly parasites are mailed to them once a week to distribute around the barnyard, in the paddock the cows are grazing, the paddock the cows just left, and in the calf pasture. They also use Ectophyte (a fly product made by Agri-Dynamics) as a topical application on their livestock.

Using DHIA has been a valuable resource for Taconic End Farm; the 'hot sheet' lets them know each month if there is a cow having subclinical signs of mastitis enabling them to treat a cow before symptoms turn clinical. Their Somatic Cell Count is usually under 100,000.

Due to a past history with Coccidiosis, Annie has a preventative management program in place for her calves: 1) the calves move to a fresh paddock every 4 days, 2) calves get homeopathic remedies Ipecac 30C, Merc Corr (30C potency) once a day for a week, 3) give the calves Paradex, at weaning (herbal wormer containing black walnut hulls, garlic and wormwood), 4) free choice kelp and salt, 5) frequent monitoring, looking at manure, weight gain and attitude.

(Continued on page 21)



(Continued from Feature Farm—Taconic End Farm, page 20)

**Continued Learning and Involvement in Organic Dairy World** —Annie and Catlin are part of a local pasture discussion group that has been going on for over 8 years. They share information on grazing strategies, economics, animal health and more. They also have a very supportive collection of family, friends and neighbors, which makes their lifestyle choice even more rewarding.

Annie was an active member of Vermont Organic Milk Producers Association, which started in 1999 in response to milk market changes that were happening in the state. VOMPA was instrumental in the creation of NODPA in 2001 and Annie soon became a NODPA State Representative and has been recently elected to a Board position. Her involvement and representation as a Vermont producer has been and continues to be extremely valuable.

After hearing Chuck Schwabb's inspirational presentation on UNH's organic dairy plans (at the Northeast Sustainable Livestock Conference) last spring, Annie and Catlin have decided to donate a bred heifer which will be brought to UNH this fall. ♦



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## Organically Certified Dairying Is it for me?

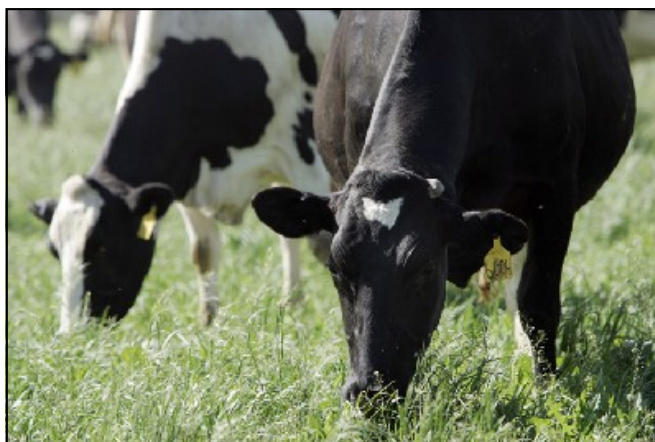
by Ed Maltby

Used to be that milk was “just white stuff” that got traded under some archaic system where the price was determined by the distance you were from Wisconsin (or the power of Midwest politicians). Now you have choices: conventional milk which has a farmgate price of approximately \$1 gallon (plus federal subsidy); raw milk up to \$5 a gallon (but make sure your insurance is up to date), and organic milk up to \$2.50 a gallon, plus hefty signing bonuses.

What are the steps in transitioning from a farmgate price of \$1 a gallon to \$2.50 a gallon, and how can a farm take this step responsibly, with awareness that this is a Federal program that exists on the goodwill and trust of consumers?

The first question is always, “Is there a long term future for premium organic milk with a farmgate price that can pay a living wage and give a return on investment, thereby increasing my net worth?” All the indications are that demand will exceed supply for at least the next five years and, if strong standards can be maintained, even longer than that. If high standards for both grazing nutritious pasture and for replacements are enforced universally across the country, there will be a long future for economically viable small and large organic dairies. So there is no hurry to rush into the transitioning process without sufficient planning; not what your bank manager might want to hear!

**The First Step**, as with any new farming opportunity, is to talk with other farmers in your geographic area. They will be able to put into context the different costs of supplies and services, allowing you to make some initial decisions as to whether your current operating system will fit with the spirit and legal requirements of the USDA organic program. Organic farming systems are not for everyone. If you do not like to keep detailed records that have to be shared with your certifier and Federal government representatives then think twice. If you are currently using conventional fertilizers and treating your cows extensively with antibiotics, then transition will be a long, and possibly painful process as you learn new skills.



**The Second Step** is to choose a certifier. This will be a long term relationship with an organization that will be working with you on all the details of your operation. If possible, start your search based on recommendations by your farming peers. Your neighbors and colleagues will be able to pass on their many personal opinions and experiences. The New Farm website has a page that compares certification agencies and provides an opportunity for farmers to give feedback at [www.newfarm.org/ocdbt/howto.php](http://www.newfarm.org/ocdbt/howto.php). There is also the ODAIRY and OMILK list serve; farmers' meetings; NODPA Field Days; and NODPA Board

members and state reps who can help if you don't know anyone who is organically certified. The USDA National Organic Program website is the official source for the regulations, and also lists all approved certification agencies – see [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop). Another good source of free information is ATTRA, a project of the National Center for Appropriate Technology.

They have a comprehensive workbook that aids in evaluating whether your livestock operation meets NOP standards and is available online at [www.attra.org/attra-pub/summaries/livestockworkbook.html](http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/summaries/livestockworkbook.html), or in hard copy by calling 800-346-9140. Certification charges vary enormously; in this case the old adage that the advice and service are as good as what you pay for is very true. Be sure to call and ask questions. That initial connection will be illustrative of what they can do in the future.

When you have picked a couple of possible certifiers, contact them for the application forms. These forms become the basis for your Organic System Plan (OSP) which must be updated every year, or any time you make a significant change. The certifier will look at your OSP and work with you on deciding the length of time before you can ship organic milk, which can vary enormously if your system is grass based; depending on how well developed your OSP is, and if you have detailed historical data. If you have a mostly grass based system with little recent use of commercial fertilizers, herbicides, or other prohibited substances on most of your acreage, you may be set up to transition your herd for the required year of organic feed and management. If you have been using herbi-

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from *Transitioning*, page 22)

cides, insecticides, genetically modified seeds, urea and other commercial fertilizers and/or other prohibited materials on much of your crop acreage recently, then it may be a three year transition period before your cropland and herd can be organic. The rules now allow the herd to transition along with the third year of land transition. It is important to talk to the certifier early in the process before you start the transition period, as any mistakes made regarding use of fertilizers, feed additives, or health care products may mean a delay in your shipping date. This is the time to be honest with your certifier about your historical practices and your ability to sign affidavits as part of a Federal program. The OSP forms the basis of your contract with the certifier and is your farm plan for the future: not just a check list of multiple choice questions. Choosing a local certifier who has a long history of working with farmers and employs well qualified inspectors will result in fewer problems in the long term, even if it takes slightly longer to ship organic milk from your farm. Once your forms are completed, the certifier must review them, communicate with you if there are any problems, and schedule an inspection. After your farm has been inspected, the certifier will notify you of the decision and date that you are eligible to ship milk.

**The Third Step**, once you have a date when you can ship milk, is to arrange interviews with at least three of the processors that are buying organic milk (see the list on page 33). The base farmgate price and price for quality and components are the same for most companies; however signing bonuses/transition assistance and assistance with purchasing organic feeds along with corporate philosophy can vary widely with different companies. Unlike conventional milk, each producer signs an individual contract with the processor, and is then paid by their current milk handler so there is no need to change the cooperative through which you currently ship milk. Contracts will usually be for two years if you received transition payments from the processor, but many more experienced farmers are signing for just one year, to give more flexibility in a rising market. Unlike many areas of agriculture, the organic dairy farmer is in the drivers' seat when negotiating a price, the level of support while transitioning (some companies will pay the cost differential between organic feed and conventional feed for three months or longer, in one case up to

\$100,000); length of contract, and future support services.

**The Final Step** is to become involved with other organically certified farmers, either officially organized like NODPA and some Cooperative Extension groups, or individual farmers who are willing to help out. Organic farmers are very willing to share their experiences so be prepared for long conversations. Be aware that organic milk is now a multi-million dollar business and that it is seen by the billion dollar or-

**All the indications are that demand for organic milk will exceed supply for at least the next five years and, if strong standards can be maintained, even longer than that.**

ganic industry as an entry point for consumers to start buying organic products. Processors, or farmers representing processors, usually have a financial interest in convincing you to adopt certain practices or build relationships with processor-sponsored discussion groups. These relationships will assist you with the many different farming practices that

you will need to follow.

Unlike other certification programs, organics relies on whole system planning and on building the fertility of your land and animals over four or five years. It is no silver bullet and will require a change in mindset for most transitioning farmers. If you decide an organic management system is a good fit, there is plenty of support but remember, much like good wine – one can't rush becoming certified organic. ♦



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## Emergency Forages After the Floods

*By Rick Kersbergen, UMaine Extension*

The Northeast has certainly had its share of challenges this spring and early summer. While we had a short window of good weather in late April, it seems that the "April showers" led to rain soaked May and June. Most of us had experienced record rains in both May and June.

So where does this leave us for forage supplies this winter. Corn silage or grain crops in Maine were planted late if at all, and suffered from poor stands, rotted seed, lack of opportunity for good early weed control, nitrogen losses from flooded fields or from leaching. Many farms probably drove machinery in places that were too wet out of desperation and the resulting soil compaction will be an issue for years to come.

Harvesting hay or haylage in May and June was also impossible. Forage quality of material that is being harvested now (July 7<sup>th</sup>) will be of poor quality and palatability. Pastures also suffered from animal traffic and mud.

Nothing new to anyone in this article so far... Now for a little optimism. What does all this give producers for opportunities?

Pasture renovation opportunities! Since many of your pastures were probably damaged by foot traffic and plugging, now may be a good time to use this opportunity to renovate and/or add new species to the paddocks heavily damaged. Perhaps you may want to try planting some summer annuals that can help extend the grazing season, such as some of the brassica species. Brassica crops such as turnip, rape, kale, or swede are fast-growing crops that are good options for grazing. These crops are highly productive, and can be grazed from 80 to 150 days after seeding, depending on the species. These crops must be treated more like "concentrates" than "forage" in nutritional planning for livestock because of their high digestibility and low fiber content. You may consider using these crops in combination with some small grains to provide some fiber and limit the potential for off-flavored milk from lactating cows that are grazing.

Other options for pasture or field crops include planting small grains in mid-late summer (August) for either grazing or late harvest. Oats are highly productive in the fall and can provide good forage quality. Some growers are experimenting with new forage oat varieties as well. Oats can be under sown with clover or other legumes for a new perennial sod next spring as the oats will winterkill.

Winter grains are also an option for both grazing and early forage production for next spring. Many winter grains can be seeded in August and September and be grazed in the fall. These winter grains will produce either a highly digestible forage for grazing or harvest in the spring or be left for grain production later next summer. In Maine, we have seen some amazing forage production from winter spelt, and are beginning to evaluate quality. Other winter grains you may want to experiment with are wheat and Triticale. In Maine we have had poor experiences with hardness of winter barley.

By the time you get this newsletter, it is probably too late to consider soybeans, but they can

also be used as an alternative forage. Forage soybeans can produce high protein quality forage. Soybeans are probably best preserved as wilted silage since direct-cut silage is too wet to produce a good fermentation. Most "forage" type soybeans are crops with a maturity rating of 4-7. Most guidelines recommend planting forage soybeans in narrow rows (7 inch) and at similar populations as for grain.

A good website for more information about forage soybeans is at [www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/SoybeanForage.htm](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/SoybeanForage.htm)

When late season forage production is considered, the first crops usually mentioned are sorghum type plants, including grain sorghum, forage sorghum and sorghum sudangrass hybrids. Previously considered an "emergency" forage crop, the introduction of highly digestible, high yielding forage sorghums and sorghum-sudangrass crosses (BMR) have introduced many forage producers to a crop that is more than an emergency crop.

Sorghum-sudangrass planted late will be a one har-



Corn Field on July 4, 2006

*(Continued on page 25)*



(Continued from *Emergency Forages*, page 24)

vest system. For sorghum sudangrass hybrids, seed at 65 to 70 pounds of seed per acre and plant at a depth of ½ to ¾ inch. Do not plant too deep! Rarely will weeds out-compete the development of sorghum sudangrass hybrids.

- Sorghum sudangrass hybrids contain high levels of moisture and will require wide windrow management to ensure rapid dry down. The shorter the time period, from mowing to ensilage, the higher the quality of the forage that is produced. This crop is an excellent choice for haylage or baleage production. Harvest stands at 3 to 4 feet height. These plants grow rapidly and soon after reaching 3 feet can reach 5 feet or more. Mow at a cutting height of 4 inches to encourage rapid regrowth. Do not harvest stands less than 2 feet in height.
- Graze or green chop only when forage is greater than 22-24 inches tall. Strip grazing is recommended to minimize waste.
- To avoid prussic acid poisoning and/or nitrate issues, don't graze plants
  - during or immediately after a drought, or under conditions where growth has been reduced
  - on days when a frost had occurred. High levels of the toxic compounds are produced within hours after a frost occurs
  - after a killing frost until the plant is dry and brown as cyanogenic glucosides usually dissipate within 7 days.
  - after a non-killing frost until regrowth is at least 45 cm (18 inches) tall
- Don't green chop or ensile the forage for 3 to 5 days after a killing frost.
- Allow forage to ensile for at least 3 weeks before feeding. ♦



## Flooded Lands and other Natural Disasters: Questions to Certifiers

By Lisa McCrory

There have been quite a few questions from organic and transitioning producers during this spring of heavy rains and floods. Much of this is related to how this affects a farm's certification status. NODPA News Staff thought that it would be a good opportunity to share some of these questions with some of our Northeast Certifiers to find out how they are advising their producers. Many thanks to the Maine Organic Farming and Gardening Association (MOFGA), the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York's Certification Agency (NOFA-NY),

Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF), and Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) for their contributions.

### 1. Can hay crops that have been flooded prior to harvest be harvested and fed to animals and still maintain the organic status of the milk?

**NOFA NY** - Because there are varying degrees of flooding, it is difficult to give a blanket answer. Most of the time, the crop will not be usable due to mud, so will need to be brushhogged. If the water comes up and goes right back down without flattening the crop, it should still be usable. That is an unlikely scenario, unless it is backwater.

**MOFGA** – Ordinarily, a flood event should not cause certification to be suspended for the field or crop. It is possible for floodwaters to contaminate a field with prohibited substances. An example might be sewage waste from a treatment plant. Suspension of certification for some period of time may be appropriate depending on the nature and degree of the contamination. We would consider such incidences on a case-by-case basis.

It is interesting to note that river water may be used to irrigate crops. There are no regulations specific to irrigation water in the NOP rule. (I am interested to know if other certifiers have examined and/or put restrictions on river water for irrigation...)

**PCO** - Yes, unless there was some site-specific concern discovered: such as, sewage plant flooded directly upstream, or other toxic material spilled, etc.

**VOF** - Yes, unless there were circumstances that

(Continued on page 26)

(Continued from Questions to Certifiers, page 25)

would cause an irregular amount of contamination to the crops. For example, if a toxic substance was spilled directly upstream from the farm that may be cause to decertify the crop. Many certified producers have fields that flood every spring. Despite the fact that this floodwater might have residual amounts of prohibited substances, the crops grown on these fields would remain certified. A reasonable amount of floodwater "contamination" is acceptable as anything less would be impractical to enforce.

**2. Are there any criteria that need to be met before land can be cultivated as organically certified after severe flooding?**

**NOFA NY** – No; a flood is considered an act of God, and therefore does not affect certification.

**MOFGA** – We don't have any specific criteria.

**PCO** – This would need to be on a case-by-case review for each site. Unintentional contamination that could be documented through testing of a crop is not a problem if it is below either the FDA action level for the chemical (this applies to pesticides that are now illegal), or 5% of EPA tolerance level. (see 205.671)

**VOF** – Vermont Organic Farmers does not have any specified criteria. If there were unusual circumstances, where the crop was deemed contaminated by a prohibited substance in the flood water, then the land could require up to a three year wait until it was again eligible for certification.

**3. Does flooding qualify as exceptional circumstances for either not meeting the proposed pasture standards or buying conventional hay?**

**NOFA NY** – It would qualify for allowing temporary confinement referring to the proposed pasture standards, but there is no allowance for buying conventional hay.

**MOFGA** – If the land a farmer uses to pasture his animals is flooded and soggy, putting large animals on it is detrimental to both the soil and the animals. NOP 205.239 (b) permits temporary confinement due to inclement weather, safety condition, and risk to soil. The farmer still needs certified organic feeds for the herd. The only way around the organic feed requirement is if a temporary variance is declared by the Secretary (NOP 205.290).

**PCO** – Yes, they would meet conditions for temporary confinement as per 205.239(b) - inclement weather, risk to soil and water quality.



No, they would not likely qualify for buying conventional hay, unless a wide region was affected, and the NOP administrator could be convinced to declare a temporary variance under 205.290. NOP has never done this, and as long as organic hay can be purchased from elsewhere, is unlikely to allow this.

**VOF** – The NOP Standards 205.239(b) state, "The producer may provide temporary confinement of an animal because of inclement weather; the animal's stage of production; conditions under which the health, safety, or well-being of the animal could be jeopardized; or risk to soil or water quality. VOF has already had requests this year, from farmers in counties known for their clay soils, asking to temporarily confine their animals due to excessive flooding. We

granted their requests to prevent damage to pastures and to protect the health of the animals. We did require that producers record when the animals began and ended their confinement.

Organic producers can only buy non-organic feed if the NOP administrator declared a temporary variance of the regulations due to excessive floods. If organic hay is still available, then it is doubtful that the NOP would declare such an emergency.

**4. Does flooding of transitional land affect the length of time that the land takes to be transitioned?**

**NOFA NY** – No.

**MOFGA** – It should not affect the transition time. In the unlikely event of contamination by prohibited substances, we would consider how it might affect land eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

**PCO** – A: Not unless there was a contamination problem that resulted in detection of prohibited residues in crops, as per #2 above.

**VOF** – Certified land and transitional land would be treated the same way. If the floodwater contained incidental contamination the land would not be adversely affected. If there was a specific case of contamination from a prohibited substance in the floodwater, the land might lose its certification eligibility and would have to wait up to three years to re-qualify.

**5. Can "non-certified" veterinary treatments be used to cure livestock that contract illness caused or spread by flood water without losing their certified status and continue to sell milk after any con-**

(Continued on page 27)

(Continued from Questions To Certifiers, page 26)

### **ventional withdrawal time is met?**

**NOFA NY** – No, Animals treated with a prohibited substance would still have to be removed from the herd.

**MOFGA** – No. However, the Secretary (NOP 205.290) could issue a temporary variance from 205.238 (Livestock Healthcare).

**PCO** – No, unless NOP declared an emergency variance under 205.290. This might be a more feasible variance than a feed variance, however it has never been done, and there would need to be compelling reasons. Animals must still be treated if necessary, as per 205.238(b)(7) to restore an animal to health when other methods fail, and animals/and their products treated with prohibited materials must not be sold as organic. Additional vaccinations for flood borne diseases would be allowed, of course.

**VOF** - Unless the NOP Administrator declared a temporary variance from the regulations due to excessive flooding, producers must use approved medications to treat organic livestock that qualify to produce organic milk. Producers would be made aware of any such variance from their certifier. ♦

## **Keeping Cows Healthy On Organic Dairies**

*By Linda L. Tikofsky, DVM*

Does organic dairy production require producers to forsake the use of modern medicine to maintain herd health?

Pick up any carton of organic milk at the grocery store and what do you see? Red barns and happy cows with tails, grazing on green pastures. Living organically seems to be the perfect life for a cow – animal welfare at its best.

Consumers believe this. Some 62% of them conclude organic dairy products come from animals that have been treated humanely.

The National Organic Program, which USDA directs, specifies certain conditions of animal management in its standards and guidelines:

- Animals must receive organic feed and have regular access to the outdoors, fresh air and sunlight.
- Tails cannot be docked.
- Ruminants must have access to pasture.
- No hormones, antibiotics or synthetic drugs can

be used unless they're on the National List. This list, created by the Secretary of Agriculture, defines which synthetic and natural substances can be used in organic production.

Some in the dairy industry wonder if "farming the way my grandfather farmed" in today's world is in the bovine's best interest, especially if we can easily treat common diseases humanely and economically.

**Less Disease** -Organic dairy farming isn't farming by "benign neglect." Nor does it simply substitute alternative medicines, such as homeopathic remedies and botanicals, for synthetic ones. Homeopathy treats disease by administering extremely diluted doses of a substance, such as arnica or belladonna, which in massive amounts would produce symptoms in healthy beings similar to the disease. Botanicals are medically active herbs, such as garlic and red clover.

Preventive health care practices, such as paying attention to nutrition and reducing stress, and improving overall herd health are central to organic dairy farming.

Organic farming standards require that every farm have a written organic system plan for soil health, crop production and livestock management. These plans take a holistic approach toward the farm: Soil health is essential for crop health; crop health is essential for livestock health; and livestock health, through manure applications, contributes to soil health. When this balance is achieved and the system is healthy, most dairies report a decrease in animal disease after the transition from conventional to organic farming.

Various studies have shown a reduction in lameness, metritis, mastitis and calving difficulties in herds that have made the switch. A Danish study, which followed 82 organic and 99 conventional herds for 11 years, showed that the more years that herds were in organic production, the lower the incidence of clinical mastitis and the bulk milk somatic cell counts (SCC). Shortly after transition, organic herds had SCC similar to conventional ones, approximately 350,000 cells/ml. But after 11 years, the long-term organic herds' bulk milk SCC averaged 270,000 cells/ml while conventional herds averaged 310,000 cells/ml.

A number of factors contribute to this decrease in disease. Organic dairy rations rely more heavily on forage and grazing than conventional ones. Decreased reliance on grain translates into fewer clinical and subclinical acidosis problems. Higher forage diets result in fewer digestive problems and displaced abomasums.

Cows on an organic dairy are harvesting their own food in pastures, and this increased exercise translates

into leaner, fit cows and fewer calving problems.

Of course, these advantages may translate into lower milk production for organic farms. But lowering the stress of production can also reduce health problems.

**Preventive Practices**—What conventional practices can be used on organic dairies to prevent disease? All vaccines are allowed and encouraged for herds at risk for BVD, respiratory diseases and coliform mastitis. Standards allow the use of teat dips, electrolytes, local anesthetics and aspirin.

Although producers can't include animal byproducts and growth promoters in diets on organic dairies, trace minerals and FDA-approved vitamins are allowed as long as they don't originate from slaughter byproduct sources.

Organic standards don't allow routine deworming for livestock, but producers can use ivermectin to deworm dairy animals after documenting the need. It requires a 90-day withdrawal time.

Successful organic dairies address parasite issues by prevention through:

- Prompt removal of manure.
- Beneficial insects, such as parasitic wasps and dung beetles.
- Grazing youngstock on pastures that haven't been used for adult cattle.
- Rotational grazing.

Focus on nutrition.

To give youngstock the "upper hoof," calves are raised on whole milk, and many farms won't wean them until 3 months of age.

Inevitably, an animal on an organic dairy will become ill and require treatment. Early intervention is important, and most organic producers will elect homeopathic or botanical treatment coupled with allowed conventional materials and immune system supports such as Immunoboost®, passive antibody infections or colostrum-whey injections from hyperimmunized cows.

The organic rule specifically states that "producers cannot withhold medical treatment from a sick animal in an effort to preserve its organic status." Producers must administer any and all appropriate treatments and if those include a prohibited substance, then that animal must be permanently removed from the organic herd. It may become part of a conventional dairy operation.

**The Whole Picture** — Organic production is a holistic system which balances on the three-pronged principle of soil, crop and animal. In a comfortable

housing system with a well-balanced ration, outdoor exercise, well-managed pasture and a focus on maximizing herd health, a low prevalence of disease and a high level of animal well-being are achievable goals.

If disease occurs, responsible producers look for what has gone wrong with the "system" and take measures to alleviate animal discomfort and restore health. ♦

## Net Update



### **ODAIRY-The best source of information and opinion on organic dairying and life!**

Whether you are a conventional farmer, interested consumer, purchaser of organic products or government official, you will find information that is necessary to understand the growing organic milk market. If you are an organic or transitioning dairy farmer and need information on feed, politics, equipment, workshops and much more from people doing the work, join the 654 subscribers to the list-serve which is moderated by NODPA.

This is yet another service of NODPA, so don't forget to pay your dues to keep this list serve alive and working. To subscribe to ODAIRY, follow the instructions on our Web Site, [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) or email: [ODAIRY-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ODAIRY-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

### **NODPA Web Site**

[www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) is the NODPA website which is excellently maintained and regularly updated by Elisa Clancy. The website is a resource for organic dairy farmers, organic milk producers and consumers interested in organic dairy farming and products. If you want to learn about the dairy side of the National Organic Program; find a certifier, or get some advice on transitioning; checkout the NODPA web site. If you missed an article in past NODPA News, all the back issues are there and downloadable, along with numerous articles on different aspects of organic dairy production. The site has current national news on organic dairies; an organic dairy business directory; a calendar of events; numerous links to processors and other groups, plus information on how to join NODPA and subscribe to ODAIRY.

This site is supported by NODPA, another wonderful benefit of paying your dues! Click on [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) and give it a try. ♦



# Research and Education

## NESARE Partnership Grants

Northeast SARE offers grants to agricultural professionals who work directly with farmers. Partnership Grants explore sustainable production and marketing techniques using on-farm research and demonstrations. Grants are capped at \$10,000 and the postmark deadline is December 5, 2006.

You can get application materials electronically by going to [www.uvm.edu/~nesare](http://www.uvm.edu/~nesare), or call 802-656-0471 to request a printed copy. If you have questions about the Partnership Grant program, visit the web site, call, or send e-mail to [nesare@uvm.edu](mailto:nesare@uvm.edu)

## Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA)

The WODPA organizational meeting and conference will be held October 10 and 11, 2006 in at the Ramada Inn - Mission de Oro, Santa Nella, CA which is about 35 miles south of Modesto on interstate 5. The agenda includes the WODPA organizational meeting; a processor/handler panel; a consumer panel; a session on the National ID Program, and one or two farm tours/pasture workshops. The keynote speaker on Tuesday will be Ray Greene, California Organic Program Supervisor.

For more details contact Ward Burroughs,, WODPA Acting Chairman.  
Email: [vista@thevision.net](mailto:vista@thevision.net) Tel: 209-605-4598

## Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Association (MODPA)

Organic Farming Educational Field Day will be held at Jim Greenberg Family Farm, Stratford, WI, August 4, 10:00 to 2:00. The morning program will be devoted to an educational program regarding transitioning to organic dairy production, certification issues and presentation's by Laura Paine, WDATCP Grazing and Organic Specialist, Paul Daigle Conservation Specialist and other speakers. The afternoon will feature a pasture walk and presentation about herd health. Contact Jim Greenberg 715-687-2125.

## Chico State (CA) Dairy Farm Goes Organic

*By Melissa Daugherty, MediaNews Group*

As Cindy Daley walked the fence line at Chico State University's farm this week, a curious herd of heifers tromped along in the thick grasses of their pasture, following her every move.

Likewise, the doe-eyed creatures have been under the watchful supervision of Daley, an animal science professor, who has been working to open one of the first organic dairy teaching facilities in the United States - the only one in the West.

Chico State's former dairy was the conventional feedlot sort where animals are confined to a relatively small area. But within the last year, its milkers have been sold and the program is no more. They've been replaced with a new herd - mostly jersey's or jersey-crosses - that for months has lived in cordoned off sections of a 45-acre organic pasture.

The land, along with 40 other acres that will be used to grow crops for silage, was certified last week by the California Certified Organic Farmers - part of a culmination of more than three years of organic management.

The heifers are newly pregnant and with any luck all 50 of them will calve in March, and begin providing milk in what by then will be a newly equipped parlor at the dairy. Daley is the director of the project, which will be used for myriad research activities as well as education.

Come spring, she and a team of about eight Chico State students who help manage the cows will begin to study things like pasture and milk quality. And according to Daley, the two go hand in hand. While she was careful to say that milk from conventional dairies is a good product, Daley said it's been well-documented that pasture-based dairy programs produce a higher-quality milk.

"The organic dairy cattle are healthier," she said. And that results in milk with greater amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E, and beta carotene - components that bring a higher price for the product, which is good since quantity drops significantly. At the university farm, the animals will be on pasture for about 10 months of the year - far exceeding the National Organic Program's requirement of at least 120 days. ♦



# Commentary

*'Commentary' is an open forum for sharing thoughts, opinions, concerns, and whatever else inspires you. Please send your submissions, up to 1,000 words, to any of the Editors (see page 2 for contact information). The views expressed below are those of the author(s) and in no way represent the official views of NODPA or any of its representatives.*

## Supply, Demand and Transitioning Farmers

Dear Editors:

I want to encourage farmers who are transitioning to organic dairy production to make sure they have things in place as they move forward. It is a brave move to change one's methods on the farm and change the existing relationships with feed suppliers, milk handlers and haulers. I don't want farmers to be disappointed after all their hard work.

It is vital that transitioning dairy farmers do two things. First, make sure that you have your milk market lined out. The options out there for milk marketers are varied, and everyone out there is clamoring loudly that theirs is the best choice. Review all agreements carefully and make sure that the agreement matches your needs and that you feel confident in what you are being offered.

Second I urge you to work with your neighboring organic farms to secure your feed needs. We are all aware too that various extreme weather situations have caused hardship to farmers as well, from flooding in the east to drought in the plains. There is some reason to be concerned that the increase in organic livestock production has not been matched by increased feed production, and as organic farmers we must work together to stabilize this situation.

I hope all farmers entering into organics come in realizing it is not a spot market to take advantage of but a completely different approach to stewarding the land, and that time is the best teacher.

George L. Siemon, CROPP Cooperative

## The Greenwashing of Organic Factory Farms

Over the past eight months I've had the privilege of visiting three of the largest "organic" dairies in the United States: the Aurora facilities in Colorado and Texas and Horizon's 8000-cow operation in Idaho. Despite spending millions on mostly cosmetic changes, and a massive public relations campaign, we have a saying here in Wisconsin that seems quite applicable: *You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.*

### Aurora Dairy, Platteville, Colorado

Last fall I visited Colorado at the invitation of Steve Wells, who at the time was raising, under contract, Aurora's replacement heifers and calves, and most of their dry cows. He'd become ethically uncomfortable being associated with Aurora after finding that the guidance they'd given him, suggesting that it was okay to raise organic livestock without being on pasture, was false. I was amazed when visiting his split operation, with a 12,000-head capacity, that he was not certified as an organic livestock producer. This prompted us to file a complaint with the USDA, which is still being adjudicated.

I then made an unannounced visit to the Aurora Dairy in Platteville, Colorado, and found that between 1% and 2% of their cattle were out on pasture, most of them dry cows. My third stop, just down the road, was the only other certified organic dairy in the state—where 100% of their lactating cows were grazing on superior-quality irrigated pasture. It's all about desire and *true* integrity. This other farm was not milking 4000+ cows, but 400. They also milked two times a day instead of three times as does Aurora. Obviously, the challenging environment is no excuse for compromises. Many readers will know that The Cornucopia Institute has filed a complaint with the USDA concerning these serious allegations.

### Aurora Dairy, Dublin, Texas

We were contacted this spring by someone with direct knowledge concerning a farm that was supplying the Aurora Dairy in Texas with "organic feed." It was alleged that this operation was delivering feed, prior to being certified, to Aurora and had used synthetic pesticides and herbicides during their transition. We were also able to confirm that this farm operator and his supplier were both fined by the state of Texas for applying restricted-use materials without a license. An investigation into these matters is still underway.

While doing the requisite gumshoe work in central Texas (man, is it hot down there) I also decided to visit Aurora's dairy operation, along with a reporter, photographer, and video cameraman for a major daily paper. There were green forage crops surrounding the feedlot dairy—but absolutely no cows were out on pasture. Not one! All the pasture was of uniform height without any cow pies or other evidence of recent grazing. There were, however, about 10 bulls in a very small paddock. It should be noted that Quality Assurance International submitted a letter of noncompliance last year relating to pasture at Aurora's Texas dairy, and forwarded it to the USDA.

"All of our organic cows graze on pasture and spend several months of each year on pasture, as optimized for our arid climate," Mark Retzlöff, Aurora President and CEO, wrote to the *Rocky Mountain News* in their defense. We know Mr. Retzlöff has vast experience in agribusiness, as evidenced in the millions that his enterprises have raked in from the marketplace and other wealthy investors. He knows very well how to write a sentence to create a "spin," but that's not why consumers pay a premium for organic dairy product.

Another Aurora official was recently quoted in the media as saying, "Our farms, like all organic farms, are changing and evolving as we develop our organic integrity." Quotes like

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that give us an opportunity to say that most *real* organic farmers start out with integrity and fully understand that it is a fundamental requirement to participate in the marketplace—from day one!

Regarding developing "organic integrity," Bringing in conventional replacement animals and cutting corners on organic regulations requiring pasture, so you can undercut the price of ethical farmers and their processing partners, is unethical and devoid of integrity.

We will not tolerate the actions of the millionaires who own Aurora, and their investor partners (including Harvard University), placing family-scale organic farmers at a competitive disadvantage.

#### **Dean Foods/WhiteWave/Horizon Organic Dairy, Paul, Idaho**

After repeatedly requesting access to their farm, and getting a firm "no," we were surprised when the new WhiteWave CEO Joe Scalzo invited us to visit their dairy in Idaho this June. When a Horizon employee on the farm called this spring, clandestinely, to let us know that they were preparing what she called a "dog and pony show" for executives at Whole Foods, we were interested in what they were up to. Subsequently, we were also told and later confirmed that they ran a "media day" and invited members of the press to tour the farm. In both cases we were told that none of the cows were typically out on pasture but would be paraded in front of the dignitaries during their visits. So at the end of June it was my turn to see what they were doing, and saying publicly, in terms of transforming their farm and adding pasture.

Maybe they could deceive executives from a grocery chain, or members of the media who are not farm journalists, but a number of their practices made me question their "sincerity."

1. The scale of this industrial farm was just awe-inspiring: 7800 acres spread over many parcels of land, both owned and rented, with thousands of acres of Federal Bureau of Land Management land in between, and with millions of dollars worth of brand-new and late-model farm equipment and trucks. They are currently managing 8000 animals, 4200–4400 milk cows, 414 dry cows, 3500 heifers, and one baby calf (since they sell off all their calves at birth).

2. 3500 heifers sounds like a heck of a lot if you're milking 4300 cows. Remember, that all these heifers are between one and two years of age. At that rate, if they had youngstock from baby calves on through bagging heifers, that would translate to 7000 heifers for 4300 cows. They are either being untruthful when they say they are spending \$10 million on an additional milking facility, splitting their herd, without adding any milkers, or their cull rates are unsustainable and through the stratosphere.

3. They had groups of their cows rotating through 600 acres of pasture—that's seven or more cows per acre in the desert with about 10 inches, or less, of rain a year. When The Cornucopia Institute surveyed organic dairy producers last year we found that a pretty good rule of thumb on organic farms was one cow per acre.

4. What were these cows grazing on? Oats that had gone to seed, and were about 2 to 2.5 feet tall. This did not seem to be at all palatable to the cows, and they appeared to be doing

nothing more than tromping down the stand. Although it takes a year or more to establish usable pasture in this region, we didn't see evidence of new permanent seedings.

5. Another red flag for me was access to water. Horizon personnel told me that they "loaded them up on water" before sending the cows out to pasture. When I returned I asked a grazing specialist how long she thought cows could last in that environment, on a bright sunny 90 to 95° day, without access to water. She laughed and said, "not very long."

6. I always enjoy seeing the heifers run and kick up their heels out on pasture on my place in the spring, the first time out of the barn. But I have learned that milk cows quickly habituate to being sent out on pasture and after the first few days don't seem to have the same level of enthusiasm. The Horizon cows were bolting out onto those oats and kicking up their heels. It seemed to be a unique experience for them to be outside of what Horizon staff referred to as their "winter housing" (it should be noted that 80% or more of the cows on this farm were in their *winter housing* when I visited—the feedlot). There are photographs taken of their feedlot a year or so ago by one of our members on our Web site, but though I took some photographs from the road, Horizon would not allow me to take any photographs during our tour.

7. I saw 80% of their 3500 heifers in a dusty drylot eating TMR from bunks. Although they were affording these animals "free choice" access to pasture, few were interested in the pasture of questionable quality and without water. This was certainly not a pasture-based operation.

Many of the readers of this newsletter have more direct expertise than I do in grazing livestock. How does what I have presented, and the (updated) photographs of these operations posted on our Web site ([www.cornucopia.org](http://www.cornucopia.org)) sound and look to you? Do these impress you as giant corporations you can trust to uphold the valued reputation that the organic label has earned in the hearts and minds of consumers? Or do you think this sound like a slick public relations/greenwashing campaign aimed at placing ethical farmers at a competitive disadvantage?

Dean Foods/Horizon has been telling organic dairy producers and consumers that 80% of their milk comes from "family farmers." But, in addition to their massive farm in Idaho, they buy milk from other farms with thousands of cows, including one split operation in California with 10,000 milkers. And they have signed contracts with more farms, with thousands of animals, which will be coming online soon.

These are the facts. I leave it to the organic dairy producers to decide if these corporations can be trusted. Since we're heading toward a potential surplus of organic milk, their actions could directly impact your livelihoods in the near future.

In the early 1990s, when I helped farmers organize against rBGH, producers successfully pressured some dairies to label their products "BGH free." In some areas of the country, where milk supplies were tight, processors were more apt to listen to farmers than to their consumers.

I encourage producers to weigh the implications of Aurora and Dean Foods/Horizon's attempt to *legitimize* factory farm

(Continued on page 32)

(Continued from Commentary, page 31)

organic production. If they succeed we could see the production of organic milk go the same way as conventional—shifting to large industrial-scale dairies in the West. Don't let this happen!

You have the power. We encourage you to contact your milk handlers (a sample letter is available at [www.cornucopia.org](http://www.cornucopia.org) or contact us by phone/mail) and tell them that you will not mix your ethically produced milk with production practices that cut corners (factory farms, conventional replacement animals, questionable certification, etc.). The consumer's feelings on these matters must be considered. If you ship to a cooperative you need to be just as diligent to "hold their feet to the fire." There will be a tremendous amount of organic milk coming online in the next 12 to 18 months. Many of these firms, for economic reasons, will be tempted to pick up this milk—don't let them get away with watering down the hard-earned reputation of organic dairy.

Mark A. Kastel  
Senior Farm Policy Analyst  
The Cornucopia Institute

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## More Organic Milk Sought in Northeast

**HP Hood** is starting new organic milk routes in a number of Northern Tier States (ME, NH, VT, NY, PA, OH, MI, WI, MN, IA) and would like to hear from you. Our support of sustainable agriculture, a signing bonus and transition assistance have helped many already. Please call Mike Suever at 617-887-8419.

**CROPP Cooperative~Organic Valley** Family of Farms is looking for organic dairies, both established and transitional organic dairy producers, in New York, Pennsylvania, and all of the New England States. Competitive Organic Milk Pay Price once certified organic and complete year of Transitional Funding for new farmers during herd's transitional year.

~In New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia contact Peter Miller, Northeast Region Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888) 444-6455, x407 to leave a voice message, or mobile at (612) 801-3506, peter.miller@organicvalley.coop.

~In New England States contact John Cleary, New England Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888)-444-6544 x330 to leave voice mail, or mobile at (612)-803-9087, or email at john.cleary@organcivalley.coop

**Upstate Farms Cooperative**, a member owned, full service cooperative headquartered in Buffalo, New York, is establishing their own supply of organic milk. Upstate Farms Cooperative and their owner-members operate 3 milk plants in Buffalo and Rochester, NY. Our members are interested in producing organic milk and we are currently packaging fresh, not ultra pasteurized, organic milk. If you are interested in learning more about Upstate Farms Coop,

please contact Bill Young at 800-724-6455 x 6225, byoung@upstatefarms.com or visit our website at [www.upstatefarms.com](http://www.upstatefarms.com).

**LOFCO** continues to look for milk in PA/MD, particularly southeast PA. The market is strong. Please contact Levi Miller at 717/661-8682 or Jerry McCleary at 717/577-8809.

**Dairy Marketing Services (DMS)** is looking for organic milk for its customers - H.P.Hood and Horizon Foods - at very competitive prices. We also have very attractive packages available for farms transitioning into organic dairy farming. Please contact Dave Eyster at 1-888-589-6455 extension 5409.

**Horizon Organic** continues to grow its producer partner network in the East and Midwest. Horizon Organic offers competitive pay, transitional funds during the 12 months transition of the herd and long-term contracts. Producers in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Michigan, Virginia and Kentucky contact Cindy Masterman 888-648-8377; New York, Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania contact Peter Slaunwhite 800-381-0980; Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana contact Mike Bandstra 877-620-8259.

**United Ag Services** in Seneca Falls, NY is looking for organic milk in NY and northern PA. Please contact Jim Patsos at 315-568-2750 or 800-326-4251.

*Any buyers looking for organic milk who would like to be listed in this column for the November issue, please email the desired text to Ed at [emaliby@comcast.net](mailto:emaliby@comcast.net) or call 413-772-0444 by October 5<sup>th</sup>*

DMS is looking for new Organic Milk to fill the ever - growing Organic milk market.

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## NODPA Check Off Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print name on your milk check)

request that \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company that sends your milk check)

deduct the sum of :

☐ \$0.02 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA

☐ \$0.05 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA (the amount that has been deducted in the past for national milk marketing but has now been returned to you as an organic producer if you have applied for the exemption.) If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$0.07 per hundredweight (the \$.05 marketing check-off plus \$0.02)

as an assignment from my milk check starting the first day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_. The total sum will be paid monthly to NODPA. This agreement may be ended at any time by the producer by sending a written request to their milk buyer with a copy to NODPA. Milk handlers please send payments to: Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342.

Producer signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Producer number/ member no: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of milking cows: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Certifying Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Producers—please send this to NODPA, Attn: Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342. Thank you.**

## Become a Subscribing Member!

By becoming a subscribing member you will receive NODPA News and help support the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. NODPA depends on your membership contributions and donations. If you enjoy this newsletter, visit our web page, and benefit from the education and farmer representation that NODPA has been providing, please show your support by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

**Note that if you sign up for the NODPA Milk Check- Off, you will be automatically signed up as a NODPA News subscriber.**

☐ \$35 to cover NODPA news      ☐ \$300 to become a Friend      ☐ \$500 to become a Sponsor member

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a certified organic dairy producer? Yes No

Number of milking cows: \_\_\_\_\_ Milk buyer: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you transitioning to organic? Yes No      If Yes – proposed date of certification \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this form with a check payable to NODPA to: Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342. Thank you.**



# Calendar

## Rotational Grazing Systems on Organic Dairy Operations

August 9 – Tinmouth, VT

August 24 - Orange, VT

August 29 - Newport, VT

September 11 Putney, VT

September 22 - Enosburg Falls, VT

10 AM – 2 PM, BYO lunch

FREE for transitioning/organic dairy farmers, others = \$8 NOFA-VT members, \$12 non-members. These grazing workshops will cover the benefits of *Rotational Grazing or Management Intensive Grazing* for its nutritional contribution to a daily ration, its economic advantages and a nutrient source for pasture and hay land. Workshops will take place on organic dairy farms all over Vermont. Topics covered during these workshops will include; calculating paddock size and available dry matter, ideal grazing heights, grain rations to complement pasture, water systems, laneways, livestock health, plant identification and management

strategies to increase the plants you want and eliminate the plants you don't. Contact NOFA-VT: 802-434-4122, [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org)

## The Scoop On Poop

August 16, UVM, Burlington, VT

August 17, Danville, VT

Dr. Anne Zajac, small ruminant parasitologist, is back to give us an understanding of the ways of internal parasites and how to use fecal egg counts on your farm. One workshop will be in Burlington at UVM. More details to come. Co-sponsored by UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture's Small Ruminant Dairy Project, VT Grass Farmers' Assn., NOFA-VT, UVM, VT Sheep and Goat Assn. Contact: Carol Delaney, [carol.delaney@uvm.edu](mailto:carol.delaney@uvm.edu), 802-656-0915.

August 18 and 19

## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days

Organic Dairy Research Farm, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

(see pg. 1 this issue)

## Using Grants to Help Establish Grazing Systems Pasture Walk, August 24, 10 am- 2 pm

Benterra Farm, 546 Cobb St. Groton, NY. Fay & Linda Benson sold their organic cows in 2003 but wanted to maintain ownership of their 140 acre farm. The challenge was to transform the farm into a business that could be run with only part-time effort and still make it profitable. They chose to work towards a grazing operation to board organic dairy heifers. Parts of the operation has benefited from 3 state and federal grants. Contact Cortland County Cooperative Extension to register, 607/753-5078. Lunch provided

August 23-25

## 1<sup>st</sup> IFOAM International Conference on Animals in Organic Production

University of MN in St. Paul

Contact Neil Sorensen,

[n.sorensen@ifoam.org](mailto:n.sorensen@ifoam.org), .html

# Classified Ads

## FEED FOR SALE

Joe Steiner, Algoma, WI 920-487-5962 (NE Wis) has MOSA-certified barley straw for sale, 2006 crop.

## WANTED- HERD MANAGER

We have a diversified farm on Rt 100 in Westfield VT, in Orleans County, Vermont. Our fields have been certified organic for 5 years and we are now transitioning our herd to organic also. Our farm consists of 325 acres, 115 head of Holstein dairy cattle, 60 cows and the balance of heifers and calves. We have a rolling herd average of about 21,000 lbs. Our barn is a tie stall with pipeline milking system. Our business also includes a 6200 tap maple operation. Our farm was named Vermont Dairy Farm of the year in 2004. We are looking for somebody to work with us to manage the herd primarily and also help with other aspects of the business; crops, maple, etc where possible. We are also interested in the possibility of a future dairy farm partnership or sharemilking agreement with the right person. This position could be ideal for a couple if both need employment. We provide housing 1/4 mile away from the dairy barn. If this sounds interesting to you we would be happy to visit with you. This position is open immediately. Please call us at

802-744-2733. Email is [jcou-ture@together.net](mailto:jcou-ture@together.net)

## FARM FOR SALE

East Middlebury, VT- Includes 45 acres of cropland and 30 acres of woods along both sides of Rte 116. Traditional farmhouse and historic red barn make farm a very good site for direct marketing. Seller (the Vermont Land Trust) seeks buyer who will establish a commercial farming enterprise. Farm will carry a conservation easement and farm affordability option, ensuring perpetual agricultural use. Asking price is \$240,000. For more information please visit

[www.vlt.org/ElmerFarm](http://www.vlt.org/ElmerFarm) or contact Siobhan Smith at 800-639-1709 or [Siobhan@vlt.org](mailto:Siobhan@vlt.org).

## LIVESTOCK FOR SALE

—Organic 15 month old Holsten Bull for sale. Ready for pasture. Barnes and Barnes Organic Dairy, 170 Barnes Rd, Albion, Me. 04910. Email: [babbarnes@uninet.net](mailto:babbarnes@uninet.net)

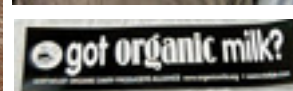
-For sale from a seasonal heard (out of my window), 5 or 6 short-bred heifers, cross-breds' due late July through Jan. Prefer to sell as a group. Call/email for more info. Dave Johnson, Provident Farms, 1254 Blacks Creek Rd., Liberty, PA

16930 Email: [provident@epix.net](mailto:provident@epix.net). --Harley and Linda Thomas has a herd of 40 certified organic Jersey milking cows for sale for \$2,500 per cow they can be reach at 989 661 2354.

— We have 3 registered jersey heifers due to calf with 2nd calf in

August. Heifers are not certified organic. Raised organically except for the grain. Asking \$1500.00 each for these heifers. Will sell them singly.

Phone number for additional info: 315-858-9732. We are located in upstate NY. Kathryn Dill



## Get Your NODPA Gear To-day!

Hat = \$15.50 T-shirt = \$13.50

Bumper Sticker = \$1.25 each (or) 25 for \$19.75

## Shipping Included

Make check payable to: NODPA.  
Send to: NODPA, c/o Ed Maltby  
30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
(NODPA)  
c/o Ed Maltby  
30 Keets Rd.  
Deerfield, MA 01342

Prsrt Std  
US Postage Paid  
Permit 183  
Turners Falls, MA

REGISTRATION: NODPA FIELD DAYS &  
PRODUCER MEETING DINNER

Cost	Friday, August 18th	Qty.	Total
\$10	Field Trip, suggested donation		
\$25	Dinner, per person		
\$10	Dinner, under age 12		
Free	Transitioning Farm Member		
<b>Saturday, August 19th</b>			
Cost	Workshops and Field Trip	Qty.	Total
\$35	NODPA member per person		
\$70	Non-member per person		
\$50	NODPA member farm family		
\$85	Non-member farm family		
<b>Saturday—Lunch</b>			
\$15	Lunch		
\$35	NODPA Subscribing Membership		
<b>Total Amount Enclosed</b>			
Plan to attend tour of Stonyfield facility		Yes	No
<b>Pre-register and save! Register after 8/10 add \$5 per meal.</b>			

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: NODPA  
Mail to: NODPA c/o Ed Maltby,  
30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342  
Fax: 866-554-9483 or email to [ednodpa@comcast.net](mailto:ednodpa@comcast.net)  
Pay by credit card: circle card type: Master Card or Visa  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ Questions call: 413-772-0444